



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Home Inspector Licensing and the Existing Structural Pest Inspector License

**Who regulates the Home Inspector licensing law?** The [Home Inspector Act](#) (RCW 18.280) is administered through the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL).

**Who regulates the Structural Pest Inspector licensing law?** The [Washington Pesticide Control Act](#) (RCW 15.58) and the [Rules Relating to Wood Destroying Organisms](#) (WAC 16-228) are administered through the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

**Who needs to be licensed as a Home Inspector?** Any person who carries out a noninvasive examination of the condition of a home, often in connection with the sale of that home, using special training and education to carry out the inspection. This includes inspection of structural components, exterior, interior, roofs, plumbing, electrical, heating, and air conditioning systems. For further details, see the DOL Home Inspector website and the “Standards of Practice for Home Inspectors” at the following:

[www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors](http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors)  
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=308-408C>

**Do I need to be licensed as a Home Inspector if I’m just doing complete wood destroying organism (WDO\*) inspections during a real estate transaction?** No.

Note: WDOs include subterranean and dampwood termites, carpenter and moisture ants, certain wood infesting beetles, and wood decay

**Structural Pest Inspectors are required to inspect for WDOs, damage from WDOs, and conducive conditions leading to the development of WDOs. Are Home Inspectors required to inspect for any of these?** Yes, they must report the presence of wood decay and conductive conditions. However, a Home Inspector CANNOT inspect for or report on the presence of wood destroying insects unless they are a licensed Structural Pest Inspector. See the following website addressing this issue:

<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/docs/WhatHomeInspectorsCanSayAboutWDI.pdf>

**Will my Structural Pest Inspector license qualify me to be a Home Inspector?** No.

**Are Home Inspectors allowed to be licensed as Structural Pest Inspectors?** Yes, many will carry this license because some homebuyers expect that a home inspection includes reporting of wood destroying insects and associated damage by these insects.

**Will my Structural Pest Inspector insurance and/or surety bond satisfy the Home Inspector license requirement?** Home Inspectors, licensed by the DOL, are not required by RCW 18.280 to carry insurance or a surety bond. Structural Pest Inspectors must still provide evidence they have errors and omissions insurance and/or a surety bond before being licensed by WSDA.

**Do home inspection reports require the use of an Inspection Control Number (ICN)?** No, they do not but if you are a Structural Pest Inspector and conduct a complete WDO inspection, an ICN is still required on your report.

**When does the new Home Inspector law take effect?** The bill became effective on June 12, 2008. Experienced home inspectors with two or more years in the business prior to June 12, 2008 are required to become licensed on or before September 1, 2009. Newer inspectors, those not having been in the business for two or more years prior to the effective date of the law, have until July 1, 2010 to meet the training and education requirements and become licensed. New inspectors just entering the business are required to meet the training and education requirements and become licensed by September 1, 2009. The Home Inspector website can provide you with more details and the link is shown below:

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors/hilicense.html>

**If I know of an unlicensed inspector doing this type of work in Washington, who should I contact?**

- For unlicensed Home Inspectors – Rhonda Myers – 360.664.6487 or [DOLINHomeInspector@dol.wa.gov](mailto:DOLINHomeInspector@dol.wa.gov)
- For unlicensed Structural Pest Inspectors – Dr. Dan Suomi – 360.902.2044 or [dsuomi@agr.wa.gov](mailto:dsuomi@agr.wa.gov)

**Where can I get more information on the Home Inspector and Structural Pest Inspector licenses?**

For the Home Inspector license, visit the Department of Licensing website at:

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors/index.html>

For the Structural Pest Inspector license, visit the Washington State Department of Agriculture website at:

[http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpilInfo.aspx#Structural\\_Pest\\_Inspectors](http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpilInfo.aspx#Structural_Pest_Inspectors)